

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, May 7th 2015

He made no distinction between us and them.

On the contrary, we believe that we are saved

through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they. Acts 15

Remain in my love. John 15

One of the most remarkable things Jesus said to his disciples, and says to us is, "As the Father loves me, so I also love you." That takes some real personal reflection and acceptance. It is really hard to imagine how much the Father loves Jesus. But we can try to imagine that it is a love which is extraordinary. So, when Jesus says that he loves us just as much, it is overwhelming. It is so wonderful that it is difficult to get close to. Jesus loves us - he loves me - as much as the Father loves Jesus.

And, what he asks is that we "remain" in his love. It is hard for me to even get there in the first place, but to remain there, to stay there, to make my home there, is quite challenging. Why? I suppose St. Augustine had it right. We were made to make our home in that love and our hearts are restless until they rest in him.

So, when I reflect upon what makes my heart restless, the reflection can get very close to home. I can name the things, the attractions, the temptations, the self-absorptions, the self-pity, the anxieties, the comparisons, the fears which can all be saying, with loud voices, "Make your home here, Stay here, remain in this place."

It comes down to self-awareness and making choices. To choose freedom is to choose to let go of what is keeping me from seeking a happiness that will always elude me. It means saying, "I don't want to make my home in frustrations, judgments, anger, stress or false pleasures or victories." It means being attracted to being centered in a different place. Once that happens, my perspective changes. I can no longer cling to what makes me unhappy and leaves me empty. I can see clearly that my patterns are disruptive of healthy, happy relationships and true freedom.

Jesus says, "I love you with an everlasting love" and each one of us is facing the opportunity to

welcome it and to make our home in it. When I'm at home in, when I remain in his love, I'm in a peace that I know and can feel. It feels centered. I can feel what being loved allows me to do. I'm not longer afraid. I have courage. And my heart is again capable of compassion and mercy.

That's what we can ask for today: To desire this grace. Or even to desire the desire for it. "I long to make my home in your love for me, dear Jesus. I long to remain in your love, today." "And, then, I will give myself to loving others as you love me."

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